



**COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS
DIVISION OF INSURANCE**

**Healthcare Access Bureau
Database System**

REQUEST FOR INFORMATION

June 6, 2006

The Division of Insurance (“DOI”), acting on behalf of the Health Care Access Bureau (“HCAB”), is contemplating the release of a Request for Response (“RFR”) for Information Technology services relating to the development of a system which will aid the DOI in the collection and dissemination of data and the creation of a database containing all Massachusetts residents who are members of creditable health care plans.

This Request for Information (RFI) is intended to solicit information that could be useful in deciding the most efficient, secure, and effective technical methods for accomplishing the objective. The DOI intends to utilize such information in the drafting the RFR

Procedural Information

This RFI is not an offer or solicitation and does not obligate or bind the DOI to procure any goods or services as a consequence. Responses to this RFI do not constitute bids or proposals and are not legally binding on the responding party. Respondents may not charge the DOI for any costs associated with the preparation of responses to this RFI. This RFI is being released on Commonwealth’s Procurement Access and Solicitation System (Comm-PASS). A copy of this RFI is also available at the DOI’s web site at <<http://www.mass.gov/doi/>>

The schedule of events for this RFI, subject to change, is:

Tuesday, June 6, 2006	RFI released on Comm-Pass/Posted to Web
Monday, June 12, 2006	Informational Session
Monday, June 26, 2006	RFI Responses Due
Friday, July 7, 2006	Anticipated release date of RFP

The informational session will be held at One South Station, Hearing Room A, 5th Floor, Boston, MA 02110 from 9:00 am to 11:00 am. Please inform the Chairperson of the Procurement Management Team via e-mail if you will attend the session so that adequate seating can be made available. Organizations or individuals responding to this RFI in hardcopy should submit five copies of their response to the Chairperson of the Procurement Management Team by 5:00 pm on Monday, June 26, 2006. If possible, responses should be submitted via e-mail in MS-Word format.

The Chairperson of the Procurement Management Team is:

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Confidentiality of Responses

Information provided to the DOI in response to this RFI and identified by the respondent as trade secrets or commercial or financial information shall be kept confidential to the extent permitted by law and shall be considered by the Division as exempt from disclosure as a public record as provided in Chapter 4, section 7, clause 26 of the Massachusetts General Laws. This exemption may not apply to information submitted in response to any subsequent RFR.

1.0 Background

Chapter 26 Section 7B of the General Laws states that: “For the purposes of implementing Chapter 111M, the Health Care Access Bureau shall maintain a database of members of health benefit plans. Carriers licensed under Chapters 175, 176A, 176B, and 176G and the office of Medicaid shall report on the first day of each month to the Bureau the names, and any other identifying information as determined by the Division, of each resident of the Commonwealth for whom creditable coverage, as defined in chapter 111M, was provided during the previous month. The Division will enter into an interagency agreement with the Department of Revenue (“DOR”) for purposes of implementing said Chapter 111M and, in consultation with the DOR, shall adopt regulations defining the content of such reports, which shall be limited to the minimum amount of personal information necessary for the purposes of said Chapter 111M. Their reports shall not contain any information pertaining to previous or current health conditions or treatments. The DOI may transfer the content of the database to the DOR for the purposes of implementing Chapter 111M.”

As stated above, the DOI under the provisions of the law will need to collect information from licensed carriers and Medicaid for all members to whom they provide creditable coverage. The data fields that need to be collected are as follows:

1. Name of covered person (for each subscriber and dependent)
2. Address (of each listed name)
3. Social Security Number (of each listed name)
4. Date of Birth (for each listed name)
5. Field (Y/N) indicating whether or not coverage is creditable coverage (to be defined later)
6. Insurance Company name
7. Covered person’s coverage effective date
8. Covered person’s coverage ending date (if applicable)
9. Identification of whether person is in individual or family coverage
10. Unique Plan Identifier Code for individual or family coverage that ties all dependents back to the subscriber

This information needs to be collected initially and then refreshed in such a way that all changes in coverage (and especially gaps in coverage) will be reflected by the data throughout the year.

The information will be collected and used to update the Health Care Access Bureau database (HCABDB). This database, which will be built as part of this project, will contain information on all Massachusetts residents, who have health care coverage from any of the carriers and/or from Medicaid. (This database information will be shared periodically with the DOR for the purpose of matching the Carrier information with data that has been submitted with tax returns.) Because the feeder files and the HCABDB will contain Social Security Number and other confidential information, special controls must be designed into the processes to ensure proper and secure handling of this information. The DOI is soliciting suggestions from respondents about business practices and specific technical techniques for properly and securely handling Social Security Number and other sensitive data.

2.0 Needed Functionality

The following are the functionalities anticipated by the DOI in our overall HealthCare Access Bureau Database System. In each of these items, the DOI is requesting information relative to how best to technically build and execute these functionalities.

The Health Care Access Bureau Database System will consist of the following segments:

- a. A secure website (or alternate methodology) designed for the approximately fifty (50) Carriers to upload their files and, if needed, for the DOR to select appropriate records from the database.
- b. Deployment of all security aspects for the website, delivered files, the database, and extracted data sent to DOR.
- c. Construction and deployment of Web-based programs for the upload of files from Carriers and for the selection and transfer of records to DOR.
- d. Construction and deployment of the database (HCABDB) which will be updated periodically by the Carrier files submitted, and it will be maintained by the DOI. Data from this database will be shared with the DOR for the purposes of implementing Chapter 111M.
- e. A system for validating the data that is sent to us by carriers. For example: validation of dates, formatting of fields, required field verification, duplicate records, other “sanity” checks. In addition, an efficient method for making error files available to the carriers for the purposes of “cleaning” their data.
- f. A method for keeping track of Carrier submissions with e-mail and web reminders of missing submissions or errors not resolved. (Carriers must submit an updated file periodically.)

- g. Provisions for both “total overlay” submissions and “selected overlay” submissions.
- h. Provisions for the DOR to initiate the secure transfer of the entire file or portions of the file.

3.0 Logistics

The DOI is located at One South Station, Boston, MA 02110. Its computer facilities are at the same location. The DOR Information Technology facilities are at 200 Arlington Street, Chelsea, MA 02150. The various insurance carriers are geographically located all across Massachusetts.

The deadlines for implementation of the various stages of this system are as follows:

08-15-2006	Begin Project
09-01-2006	Publish Final Carrier Specifications
10-01-2006	Publish Final DOR Specifications
04-01-2007	Complete System development
11-01-2007	Complete Testing with Carriers
12-01-2007	Complete Testing with DOR
01-01-2008	Collect data files from Carriers
01-31-2008	Transfer contents of DB to DOR

The DOI wants to be able to offer a standardized method of data transfer back and forth with the carriers and with DOR, preferable through a readily available method, utilizing appropriate security and standardized data formats. DOI estimates that there are approximately 50 different carriers with differing technological capabilities, who will need to submit data. The estimated initial load of the database will include approximately 7 million records.

The DOI utilizes Microsoft SQL Server, Windows 2003, and .NET technologies and would expect any proposed developer to utilize these technologies in developing all components of the systems.

DOI anticipates that the issued Request for Response (RFR) will ask vendors to provide pricing only for the detailed design, development and testing of the necessary systems. Hosting of the applications, databases, and web site will be part of a separate contract.

4.0 Questions

The purpose of this RFI is to provide the DOI with information that could be useful in developing an RFR for the Health Care Access Bureau Database System. Please feel free to respond to any specific questions in this RFI or to offer any other information that you

feel could be useful to the DOI in making decisions about an RFR. In addition to the issues already raised in this RFI, DOI is interested in information on the following:

- 1.) How do we ensure that proper security methods and procedures are in place for the efficient handling of large, confidential files and databases?
- 2.) How do we ensure that our Website and database are secure, dependable, available, and efficient?
- 3.) What are the proper technical mechanics and tools for building our internal system of database update and control? How do we effectively make this database available (securely and efficiently) to the DOR?
- 4.) In addition to the requirements stated above, how would you make the method of data transfer efficient and as automated as possible for the wide variety of Carriers, some of whom may not have advanced computer technology?
- 5.) How would we most effectively transfer the database or data from the database to DOR? We will be utilizing MS SQL Server.
- 6.) What knowledge, experiences and skill sets are critically important for the developer of the system described?
- 7.) Can this project be completed in the timeframe outlined in this RFI?
- 8.) Will you be responding to the RFR when it is issued in July?